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MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE
MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT 05753

The Spanish School

Report from the Spanish School, Summer 1983

This report must be complemented by the post-mortem sent previously, and therefore I will concentrate only in those matters that are most important for me.

As we begin a new year of recruitment for students, we hope that last year's experience will not be repeated. The poster for the Spanish School was not sent to many places, and not enough publicity was provided for the seven-week school and the Seminar on Puerto Rico. We got almost no creative support from the previous person in publicity, but it seems that this situation has been corrected. The catalogues were sent out late and in many cases without the adequate postage or to the wrong zip codes by the company hired to perpetrate this misdeed. The add in The New York Times was far from imaginative. Given all of the above, it was a miracle that we did get as many students as we did. This year we plan to mail out a poster especially dedicated to the seven-week school, and we hope to have our catalogue out early.

Enrollment was 5% less than the previous year, but especially strong at the 500 level. This may mean that going abroad became very attractive this year due to the strong showing of the dollar. It is not easy to project the future, but the new language requirement approved in New York State may encourage more people to attend our Graduate School.

The faculty performed at an extraordinary high level, even given the traditionally excellent standard at Middlebury. Prestigious home institutions were represented (Princeton, Chapel Hill, Duke, Smith, MIT, the Universidad de Salamanca, UC at La Jolla, etc.), offering to our students superb teaching. The student evaluations were in general very positive. We expect next year to supplement our faculty with professor Pottier, from la Sorbonne, and to introduce a few changes, but in general the same strong faculty will continue. It may not be unimportant to mention that faculty members got along very well with each other and found the time to participate in most activities, from soccer to theater, from special workshops in a week-end to the cabaret.

There were no significant changes in the curriculum from previous years, except in the 400 and 500 level grammar courses where a new team experimented with new books and approaches. For next year we anticipate the special problems and possibilities created by the addition of a beginners' course. We had this year a rather good observance of the language pledge, perhaps due to the fact that no

true beginners were on campus. Next year may prove different. On the other hand, the new 100 level may allow us to experiment more with language instruction, that has become rather traditional, even if continues to be effective.

Among the many activities of this past summer worth while mentioning, I will highlight only two: the theater and the lecture series. The theater was very successful and active due to the work of Professor Alberto Castilla and Professor Patricia González. Professor Castilla directed three plays, El auto de los coches and El viejo celoso, both at the Zoo at Hepburn, and Lorcaś La zapatera prodigiosa. Professor González, with her 300 level class, presented Lorcaś La casa de Bernarda Alba and a Chilean play, Baño a baño. The lecture series was designed to bring outstanding scholars and writers to the campus, who would not normally know of our work here. The Mexican writer Carlos Fuentes read from the manuscript of his as yet unpublished novel Cristóbal Nonato. Professor Ciriaco Morón Arroyo (Cornell University), taught a class on Saint Theresa's Las moradas, and lectured on Ortega y Gasset. Professor Javier Herrero (University of Virginia at Charlottesville), taught a class on Angel Ganivet and lectured on La Celestina. Dr. Antonio Márquez gave a very well-received lecture at Dana on the Spanish Inquisition. Professor Gervasio Garcia and Professor Marcia Rivero (both from the University of Puerto Rico) spoke about Puerto Rican history. Dr. Theodore Beardsley, Director of the Hispanic Society of America, lectured on the tango in the United States. The series of special lectures for the seven-week students was continued this year, as well as special classes (extremely well attended) on Latin American dance. The two seminars, on Al-Andalus and on Puerto Rico, were of greater importance than may be surmised by the low enrollment (they ran at the same time). The lectures and seminars of both seminars were always very well attended and helped to create true intellectual curiosity regarding both topics. The Al-Andalus seminar created also some good interaction between the Arabic and the Spanish School. I am grateful to Peter Abboud for his enthusiasm, patience, and dedication. The instructors of both seminars were pleased with the experience and expressed their admiration for the Middlebury Summer School. These activities, plus sports, films, videotapes, and classes kept everyone quite active and alert.

Except for some minor problems mentioned in the post-mortem, I consider that the support received from Sunderland was very positive and effective. I found the addition of David Rowe useful. Working with the Dean, Roberto Véguez, continues to be

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one of the best aspects of this job.

(A very minor but not irrelevant observation: I received several complaints about the food at Proctor. Since I am a House Fellow at Vassar I have been eating at the cafeteria here for almost three weeks and, as much as I dislike to compare, the comparison has been enlightening: Proctor must improve, it certainly can.)

As for the future: I contemplate to keep the highest level possible in the faculty, bringing each summer people who are superior teachers and distinguished as scholars. In a few years we may change part of our image, that lags under the weight of its illustrious past, the so-called Golden years. For me, quite frankly, the Golden years are now, since so much progress has been made in almost every field. But we need to get this message across. We are working to bring to campus again next summer a major novelist, and we hope to offer to the students the possibility to meet some of the best Hispanists in the world. I will be working closely with Robert Blake to keep the seven-week program as the best of its kind. I do expect that the renewed interest in education, and the new requirements of language proficiency will affect especially the Spanish School. Even if we are competing with many other centers around the country, I believe that we continue to be the best Spanish Summer School. But competition is fierce, and the years to come will test our resolve to keep ahead and our knowledge of how to reach our students.

Respectfully submitted,

Randolph D. Pope

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August 18, 1983

Dear David:

Here are some of my Post Mortem thoughts. I hope that they prove to be useful. Could you please make a copy of them and have them sent to Roberto Veguez? It will save some postage.

We are almost settled in at Vassar and about to start classes, on September 1st. But before we will go for a couple of days to Brown to a meeting of the Asociación Internacional de Hispanistas. I hope to get the report to Ed in by the end of the month.

Saludos,

Randy

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ADMISSIONS

The possibility of admiting students even on the day before classes begun allowed us to have a good number of students. Unfortunately some students overlook the fact that they miss out on financial aid when they enroll late. Maybe this could be made even more explicit in our brochures. (RP)

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ARRIVALS

Arrivals were complicated by the fact that during the week-end there was no one available at Sunderland that had the authority to allow room changes. Sometimes these changes are reasonable and could be done easily. It is understandable that the authority to allow a move is taken away from the school, since this permits us to avoid excesive changes. Nevertheless, when urgent and reasonable, we should have where to go. (If a problem arrises on Friday evening, we should be able to solve it Saturday morning.) (RP)

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BUILDINGS

The buildings themselves, Hepburn and Stewart, were extremely convenient. They constitute a natural grouping where most of the time the only people a student sees are from the Spanish School. We also made very good use of Stewart upper lounge and the TV room in the lower lounge.

The fraternities used for the seminars were convenient. Some students, nevertheless, complained about being so far away from the hub of activity. We may have to think about housing faculty and members of our 84 seminar (17 more persons) at Hepburn-Stewart.

There were constant complaints about the cleaning of the rooms, corridors and bathrooms. The job is not being well done. The cleaning personnel is leaving before they arrive. More than once I observed faculty members hard at work cleaning the floors in order not to get stuck on them. This does not seem appropriate. (RP)

The stove that was removed from the faculty lounge at Hepburn should be brought back. It was missed by faculty members who like to cook. (It seems as if it was removed due to some problem with the students during the year, but a cable and a stove could surely be put there for the summer.) (RP)

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CAMPUS SERVICES

The new ruling allowing faculty members to use the health service on campus was very welcome.
The councelling service was useful for some of our students.
The swimming pool and tennis courts are important elements for the well being of faculty and students. They should continue to be well kept.
Special kudos to Jim Dodge and his crew. They were as helpful as possible and then more. Invaluable.
As always, the food service rates quite low. It can be improved.
There were constant (and to many faculty and students, irritating) violations of the hours when the French and Spanish Schools had to use the dining rooms at Proctor. Even after repeated pleas to the French School and students, lines at 1:20 or even 1:30 frequently contained French sintagms and many refused to move to the second floor as requested to do by the regulations. What can be done about this, short of just not allowing any student in after their School's time? Many students explain that their classes had kept on going after the hour. Other were not able to interrupt a tennis match, and so on. (RP)
There were also some problems regarding the use of the gym. A weekly schedule could be posted there to avoid misunderstandings. (RP)

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FACULTY

The faculty of the Spanish School was highly competent as shown by the students's course evaluations and expressed by many students informally. It must be stated (even if I am sure it must have been said before) that every faculty member worked extremely hard, with the utmost dedication. I was impressed.

Forms for the medical insurance should be sent to the foreign faculty members with their contracts. Regretably, the inconvenience of having to get one from Sunderland (a minor inconvenience to be sure, but there are so many things to think about during the summer) cost one of our faculty members a considerable amount. We could be more forthcoming and aggressive to get all our foreign faculty members insured.

Faculty continue to have children... We should strongly state in the faculty handbook that accomodations are highly inconvenient for children under the age of two. At the very least, faculty would not be able to complain about not being told. Maybe a day care center could be tried again: it should, of course, be cheaper than hiring a baby-sitter. (RP)

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FINANCIAL AID

I do not know enough about this matter. It seems to have been fine. In two cases where more help was needed we got a very useful and efficient response from Ms. Grant. (RP)

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HOUSING

See some of my observations under Arrivals, Buildings, Campus Services and Faculty.
We should perhaps underline in the Faculty Handbook the fact that housing is in dorms, in normal dorms, in student dorms, in not-air-conditioned dorms, etc.
The use of Perkins for housing a few faculty members was extremely convenient.
The Director, of course, is very grateful for having had the use of Hadley House. It served well to invite faculty members, to host visiting lecturers, and to keep the Director sane. It was complicated to share the house with German families, but it worked out, since both were good neighbours. (RP)

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LOGISTICS

The Dean merits a raise and triple-kudos.
The Secretaries at the Spanish School, Kim Griffin Riedel and Anne Winton, were splendid.
The addition of David Rowe to the Sunderland staff has been extremely helpful to the communication between the Director and the directors and, in general, between the Schools and Sunderland.
The Director of the Spanish School felt at every moment that he had the support and encouragement of Sunderland, and he had no difficulty in reaching Ed Knox or anyone else at Sunderland when it was necessary.
(Publicity continues to worry me.) (RP)
To leave the Director without a Dean for the last two weeks of classes (with two seminars) should not be adopted as common practice. (RP)

David Rowe

I. ADMISSION

A. The Spanish School System.

This system, which copies the application procedures used by Medical and Law Schools, has worked extremely well for the Spanish School. We recommend that it be continued in the future, with some improvements.

B. The Application Form.

The content and printing of the application form should be redesigned to make it more compact and easier to read by the applicant and those who will be handling it. A number of suggestions follow, some of them may be applicable only in the case of the Spanish School:

1. Eliminate the list of referees on page 3. When the applicant returns the packet to the Spanish School, the letters of recommendation are in it already.

2. Eliminate the listing of colleges attended by the applicant. We are also getting in the packet all the transcripts from those colleges.

3. Leave space in the application form for use by the staff. The space saved by the implementation of the suggestions above could be put to better use by including in the form a section to be filled out by the Language Schools staff only. This section would:
   a) eliminate the need to have so many papers shuffling back and forth between the school's office and the computer office,
   b) eliminate the scribblings on the margins of the front page of the application.

These thoughts were written down before I had a chance to talk to Anne Winton about the meeting where the application form revisions were discussed. I still think that we do not need to have the list of names and addresses of referees. A space for addresses is included in the Recommendation Form itself; if the referee does not fill it out completely, then I suggest that we do not send him or her a "thank you" note. It is not cost/time/space effective to use up so much room in the application form just to cover for that eventuality. The same applies for the transcript list on page 2.

C. The Letter of Recommendation.

1. Paraphrase the information on the Buckley Ammendment. Make it shorter.

2. Clarify the uses of the letter. Include a paragraph saying that the letter will be used exclusively for the admissions process.

3. Destroy the letter. After the student has spent a summer here, the letter should be destroyed and this procedure should perhaps be made clear to the student. Legal counsel should be sought on this matter.

D. Financial Aid Form.

See below.

II. ARRIVALS.

A. Campus Security.

1. Redesign IDs. The present "bull-clip plus id" system has met with strong resistance on the part of students and faculty alike. It was useful to identify the students and the faculty and the school to which they belong; but for intra-school identification it did not work because it was almost impossible to read the name of the bearer at any reasonable distance. Some schools, including the Spanish School, were forced to ask the students and the faculty to use two cards - the regulation ID and one with the colors of the School and the name of the bearer prominently displayed. The practical results were that only one card was used or none at all.

2. Waiting lines. At certain times the lines to obtain keys and ID cards are very long. We suggest that:

a) More personnel be assigned to Campus Security during those hours,

b) A staggered (by alphabet, or school, or session) system be established.

B. Weekend arrivals.

Arrival time is a time of high anxiety for both the students and the office personnel. A minor incident--a key that doesn't work, a room incorrectly furnished, a check that didn't arrive--can become a major irritant.

a) B and G should keep a skeleton staff those weekends. As an experiment, this should be implemented next year.

b) Sunderland should also be staffed. The Computer and Financial Aid Offices above all.

III. BUILDINGS.

Here will be discussed the conditions in which the buildings were found and their upkeep during the session. The entry on Housing, below, will deal with the procedures for assigning housing.

Hepburn, Stewart and Perkins were found by the arriving faculty and students in great condition--the rooms were clean and properly furnished. However, the upkeep of the buildings, especially the faculty's quarters, was way beneath the standards established last year. Towards the middle of the session, the rooms were left dirty, and apparently the beds were not changed. The same complaints were received about the two houses used for the seminars. There must be a way to end this see-saw pattern of one good year followed by several years of bad service. Not being familiar with B and G operations I hesitate to make any suggestions, but it seems to be the case that the persons in charge of cleaning the rooms are young and in need of constant supervision, which may not be the strong point of the regular year staff assigned to the buildings.

Classes were held in dorms, lounges, and other places equally unsuitable to that function; this, by now, is common. The lack of at least an appropriate blackboard is not, however, easily explained. It would seem to be more important that the Language Schools be provided with adequate blackboards than with the latest computer or audiovisual equipment.

A. Buildings and Grounds.

1. Supervise the work of the student (or summer) workers more closely. The regular year staff should not be responsible for them.

B. Classroom Facilities.

1. Provide adequate blackboards and lighting to make-shift classrooms.

C. Spanish School Facilities.

1. Ask the staff of the Campus newspaper to vacate some of their file drawers. The Spanish School staff has to operate with all of its materials displayed on top of desks and writing areas. In that fashion, many important items get misplaced, or covered, or even read by those for whom they were not intended. There simply is no drawer space.

N.B. In the event that the Spanish School is given Hillcrest instead of Stewart next summer, we would like to reclaim use of Proctor Upper Lounge.

IV. CAMPUS SERVICES.

A. Photoduplicating in Sunderland and in the Publications' Office. It was well and promptly done. The new Reprographic Order Form will help in budget control and future planning.

B. Food Services.

Proctor worked very well--the lines were not excessively long and they did not last as people moved through the serving room fairly quickly.

The lunch and dinner schedules for the French and the Spanish Schools again were cause for some conflicts, but these can be worked out between the respective deans.

C. The Library.

Good, efficient service from everyone.

VI. FINANCIAL AID.

This year there was a delay in distributing Financial Aid forms because of a law suit. Anticipating no such problems next year, we should,

A. Send a form with every application. This was done in previous years and it seemed to eliminate one more exchange of mail between the student and the offices. This recommendation is to be considered only if it proves cost-effective and in any such calculations the man-hours required by any other alternative system should be taken into account.

B. Make clear to the recipient the conditions under which Financial Aid is given. A number of Financial Aid recipients this year could not understand why some of them had to work and others didn't.

VII. HOUSING.

One of the most irksome problems during the first few days of any session is housing. It causes many visits on the part of students who are not satisfied with their room assignment for one reason or another and who demand changes, it clogs the schedule of office personnel who have to handle such demands.

A. Give more complete information on the available housing.
Some of the students of the Language Schools have not lived in a dorm for quite some time, if ever. A more complete, detailed description of what dorm living is should accompany the Housing card. This should perhaps be done by the individual schools, since they are more likely to know the housing conditions in their dorms.

B. Revise the Housing Card.
More information should be requested from the students, information of a more personal (Do you object to living with an older/younger person?) and academic (Do you object to living with someone at a higher/lower level of studies?) nature.

C. Streamline the process of changing rooms.
It seems too cumbersome--a letter from the office to Sunderland, from Sunderland to Campus Security, from Campus Security to the students, all accompanied by visits from the student and telephone calls to check on where the matter stands at a given moment. This is particularly irritating in the case of late arrivals, week-end crisis, or changes involving faculty members. We had a number of very embarrassing foul-ups, among them one involving the President of the Spanish School Alumni Association, and the other the Director of the Al-Andalus seminar and his assistant. They all arrived to rooms that were not ready to receive them, even though the proper procedure had been followed to make sure that this would not happen.

VIII. LOGISTICS.

"The procurement, distribution, maintenance, and replacement of material and personnel." This is the dictionary definition of the word. Here at the Spanish School we interpret it to mean "how fast and how well can you get the College support services to do something." The answer is: that depends.

There seems to be, at times, a bottleneck in Sunderland. The fact that the Spanish School offices are located at a distance from the place in which all activities, or control of activities are located places the School at a definite disadvantage. Every communication with Sunderland has to be through the telephone, or via the mail person, who comes twice a day. Any minor problem, which for any other School located in Sunderland could be easily resolved by going directly to the office of the person responsible for its solution, for the Spanish School means a memo or a phone call that may or may not get quick action. Even a small number of photocopies involves a trip to Sunderland on the part of one of our assistants.

Further. The move twice a year to Hepburn involves packing and repacking of the entire contents of two offices, with considerable damage to people and things, and with considerable waste of time. Cool and ample as the offices at Hepburn are, I personally would like the Spanish School operations to remain in Sunderland, right where they are during the year. It may be prudent to add at this point that I have not consulted with the Director of the Spanish School on this or any other matter contained in this report.

A. Move the Offices of the French School.

I would suggest that the French School Offices be moved to the Chateau, perhaps to the dining room, which by all accounts is largely unused. It would be closer to Sunderland than Hepburn is.

B. Leave the Spanish School in Sunderland.

Expand the offices of the Spanish School to those now occupied by the French School.

If these two changes are not possible, then the requests listed above under Section III. Buildings, of this report, should be carefully implemented with regards to more filing space, to which I would also add access to the photocopying machine in Proctor, perhaps by giving the School the use of a counter.

IX. REGISTRATION.

The Spanish School pre-registers its students. We find that method helps to avoid unpleasant surprises like courses with too many students, or with too few, last minute changes, not enough books, etc. This year's experience has shown that pre-registration forms should reach the offices of the School much earlier than has been the case heretofore. Next year, the School will try to have its course schedules ready at least a couple of months before the opening, so that responses from the students will reach the office with sufficient time to adjust for any unforeseen changes in the enrollment. The School will also eliminate the deadline for application, as it was perhaps a deterrent to last minute decisions on the part of some potential applicants and because it did not eliminate late arrivals, anyway. Regarding the registration procedures in general: at McCullough, the Spanish School did not have any difficulty in processing the students since practically all problems had been taken care of before their arrival at the registration site. We had a line because we were short of help to distribute the computer cards, but that will be easily solved next year by simply asking the entire office staff to be present during registration.

A. Clarify Handbook Language on Add/Drop.

On page 5 of the Handbook, under the heading "Add/Drop Proceudres" there is no mention of academic penalties, i.e., of the WD/F that a student may recieved for a course if it is dropped after the deadline has passed. The calendar on the back cover has, under July 20, the following wording: "Last Day for Add/Drop Without Penalty." It is not clear there either whether the penalty referred to there is academic or monetary. We encountered problems with some of our students who did not know that they risked a grade of WD/F for late action on dropping courses.